UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/47/PV.21
12 October 1992

ENGLISH

Forty-seventh session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 1 October 1992, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. ROGERS (Vice-President)	(Belize)
later:	Mr. GANEV (President)	(Bulgaria)
later:	Mr. ROGERS (Vice-President)	(Belize)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Rabenoro (Madagascar)
Mr. Tiu (Republic of Moldova)
Mr. Berenger (Mauritius)
Mr. Abu Jaber (Jordan)
Mr. Gros Espiell (Uruguay)
Mr. Sanon (Burkina Faso)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Office of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

92-61292 1568V (E)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Rogers (Belize), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. RABENORO (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): The General Assembly's choice of Mr. Ganev to lead the work of its forty-seventh session is a worthy tribute to his outstanding qualities and to the role his country, Bulgaria, has always played in international relations. I convey the congratulations of the Republic of Madagascar to him, and on behalf of my delegation assure him of our cooperation.

We are grateful to his predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, for having accorded the strengthening of the General Assembly's authority the highest priority among his concerns - although this did not keep him from discharging his other responsibilities with grace, competence and skill, even in the most sensitive of circumstances.

I turn now to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a member of our National Academy. He is certainly aware of the great regard in which he is held in Madagascar, and we know that his experience, his sense of duty and his humanism are all guarantees of the success of our Organization. In this time of profound change, requiring the involvement of all, we again express our support for and confidence in him.

Finally, we address our best wishes to, and welcome, the 13 new Members: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. We are pleased to be able to count upon their invaluable cooperation and to offer them our own in return.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

When I spoke at last year's session, I mentioned the need for a new charter in referring to the prospects of what was being offered us as the "new world order". I will not repeat my conclusion, especially since the declarations adopted by the recent Summit Conference of the non-aligned countries have reinforced the sense that my suggestion, as daring as it may have been, only reflects the aspirations of a fairly significant sector of humanity. I realize nevertheless, in the light of the events of these past 12 months, that it might not seem timely - not because it in any way disturbs the conservatives, but because we are unfortunately compelled to yield to the vagaries of the international situation.

And we ask ourselves: At what point can we truly speak of the new world order? Shall we call it the new order, the new world order, or the new international order? Are we sure of winning consensus around a concept that can only be the fruit of joint efforts? Indeed, before we talk of order, let us try to look within ourselves and around us!

Rare are the developments that cause us satisfaction. To be sure, work on the chemical weapons convention has finally been concluded; the operation in Cambodia seems to be supported by the parties; the international peace conference on the Middle East has shown signs of rather positive developments, in spite of some understandable hesitancy; in South Africa, the recent agreement between De Klerk and Mandela should pick up the broken thread of negotiations in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa; the political situation in Angola, Mozambique, and El Salvador is brightening; democracy is regaining stature and acceptability everywhere; and the Earth Summit in Rio unfolded in the best possible conditions.

However, shadows persist. There are instability, human tragedy, and political chaos in many countries; the eruption of a nation and the threat of

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

an entire people's disappearance in Somalia; violence and massacres in the Balkans; floods of refugees in Africa, especially, in Asia, and even in Europe; deadlock in Cyprus; foot-dragging in Western Sahara; human rights trampled by hatred, intolerance, and xenophobia; monetary and financial crisis in the industrialized countries; and mounting poverty in third world countries.

This record, though incomplete, is not very encouraging. In any event, it hardly lends itself to prognostications on what the new world order is to be. We will indeed be able to discourse validly on the subject once we have mastered disorder and political, economic, and social insecurity on the national, regional, and international levels. This finding, whose particular bitterness pains us, should not inhibit our ability to reflect and to judge. Nor can anyone say that we are entitled to hide behind the sense of malaise - indignation, even - in order to refuse to seek joint solutions, however imperfect, to the problems that we have often created for ourselves.

As a Member of the United Nations, and above and beyond any considerations of national interest or ideological affinity - inasmuch as ideologies still exist - it is up to us to affirm and constantly reaffirm the central role of our Organization in establishing peace and security, prerequisites for progress and social justice. That is the essence of the 1945 Charter. These will remain the goals of the charter that will need to replace it. That is why the Non-Aligned Movement again took up this theme from a fresh but not unprecedented perspective, so as to apply it to the democratization of international relations and the development of solidarity and equality, not forgetting the promotion of legality.

One criticism of the 1945 Charter is that it does not take sufficiently into account the desirable balance between the main bodies of the Organization - the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. To each body its own responsibilities and attributes! Each historical era has its own limitations and its own imperatives. Since people continue to call for a comprehensive approach to problems in order to achieve integrated solutions, it is important to take a new, pragmatic look - ever respectful of the spirit of the Charter - at certain provisions of the Charter.

Let us take the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council: Exercised on behalf of the entire Organization, they arose in the situation that obtained immediately upon the Second World War. Now, the alliance has not survived the victory over totalitarianism. The cold war, which in some sense crystallized and distorted the use of the veto, is now part of history. The same applies to the concept of "enemy". Meanwhile, newly independent States and new Member States have called for participation on a more responsible basis and a more equitable allocation of what they see as privileges - in fact, the implementation of democratic rules within the Organization. It is therefore not astonishing to hear speak at one point of expanding the Security Council, at another of eliminating the veto right, or at another still of extending or modifying the exercise of that right.

One fact remains: the right of veto, as envisioned in the 1945 Charter, is challenged by everyone throughout the world except those who have it. Let us apply the rules of the democratic game, and concede at least one point: the 1945 Charter can and must be revised. It will still be necessary for the five permanent members to agree as a whole to renounce their implicit veto right when it comes time for ratifying whatever changes the sovereign Assembly may adopt. That is the only way for us to overcome the impasse.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

It is necessary at the same time to define more rigorously the concept of international security - not to abridge the authority of the Security Council but to strengthen that of other bodies. Political or strategic circumstances and considerations have given that concept political, economic, social, humanitarian, ecological and even legal ramifications. It is thus possible, invoking jurisprudence, to recommend measures against a State or a regime in unexpected spheres, arbitrarily chosen on the basis of defence considerations or the promotion of special national or regional interests.

In that context, we want to state our appreciation for the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace". Despite the rigid framework within which that study was carried out, its vision is stimulating, its analyses relevant and its recommendations acceptable. We hope it will help shed new light on the concept of responsibility free from hegemony, so that this notion will attract more open, unambiguous support.

I felt it necessary to stress the democratization of international relations because the strengthening of the Organization depends on it. Only an organization whose central role is set out in the documents, practice and acceptance of its members can guarantee the establishment and maintenance of relations among nations based on trust, equity and equal participation.

We lay stress on the same principles when we address the problems of development, for we are convinced that their solution depends in large part on the status of international peace and security. So long as the international political situation is under a burden, the search for a solution to the development crisis will be in vain. The Organization - indeed, the entire United Nations system - is working along those lines, and we are glad that debate both at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

and Development (UNCTAD) and at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was marked by strengthened international cooperation for development. This theme reappeared at the high-level discussions in the Economic and Social Council. This awareness is reflected also in an acknowledgement that stress must be placed on the role of the United Nations as the only forum in which we can deal with these problems in an integrated manner.

We must draw up universally accepted principles and rules; ensure coordination among the various development forums; harmonize the modalities for action by financial, monetary and trading institutions; and above all be aware of the political dimension of the decisions we shall have to make at all levels. That is the role of the Economic and Social Council; we must streamline and consolidate its functions in analysis and orientation to make it more effective system-wide.

On the institutional level, we note a willingness to create controls - and the beginnings of that process - although unequal means do not always favour consensus among the bodies concerned.

Then there is poverty. It is unbearable for its victims; it is unacceptable in a world that espouses solidarity. It has always been the lot of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, where economically fragile, poorly integrated, dislocated, marginalized societies barely survive, side by side with pockets of prosperity.

I want to make special reference to my own continent of Africa, where poverty and its attendant disease, natural disasters and social conflicts have devastating, degrading effects. How can we ignore the fact that by the end of the century, although we expect 400 million fewer impoverished people in the world as a whole, there will be 100 million more in Africa?

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

We are sometimes criticized for self-pity and for not making the efforts necessary to eliminate poverty in our countries. We are not immune to such criticism, but is it not true also that poverty will be eradicated only if the pace of economic growth is accelerated and if together we can solve the problems that are the underlying causes of underdevelopment? Give us the tools for action, quickly and under tolerable terms.

In that context, I want to stress the urgency of reconsidering the question of our external debt; initiatives taken thus far have had no significant impact, despite the best intentions and despite a number of generous gestures made. We believe that initiatives must be reviewed and expanded to ensure the resumption of development and growth. To be complete, these initiatives must include additional resources, whether these come from official aid, the "peace dividend" or transfers in the form of investment.

In that context, we hope an international conference on development financing will take place and will respond to our difficulties in implementing the various programmes and plans of action that have been adopted for the development of the countries of the South.

Environmental protection and the promotion of sustainable development are the great challenges of the 1990s and beyond. We must therefore ensure the swift implementation of Agenda 21. Though an ambitious programme, it is commensurate with our respective responsibilities.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

Madagascar welcomes the convening in 1993 of the World Conference on Human Rights, in 1994 of the International Conference on Population and Development, and in 1995 of the World Summit for Social Development.

The holding of those conferences reassures us in our determination to establish a society based upon social justice and true democracy, as reflected in the Constitution recently adopted by the people of Madagascar. We wish to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General and to the institutions and the friendly countries which have supported us in this process.

New prospects for action are opening before us in the political, economic and social spheres. We have discussed them, reflected on them, and compared and contrasted our ideas regarding them. We have not always managed to avoid recrimination and confrontation, but over four decades - which will soon be five - we have constantly sought the best ways and means of promoting and perfecting cooperation between our peoples and between our States. With this cooperation we have everything to gain; without it we have everything to lose.

This certainty could have been a valid guide for us in our common quest for more peace, more justice and more progress - in a word, for bringing about a more humane world. We could have succeeded long ago had the course of events been more in our favour and had we agreed together to turn our visions into reality. General instability led us to doubt ourselves and also one another. However, the fact that we are gathered here bears witness to our readiness and determination to turn towards the United Nations in order to draw renewed certainty from it.

This is not a risk-free undertaking, since it reveals our weaknesses and shortcomings. It is, however, worth making the effort in order to enable us to adjust our commitment to the challenges that continually assail us. Let us

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

hope that it will lead to a renewal which is beneficial to the Organization and which in the final analysis will help us to keep the promises we have made to our peoples.

Mr. TIU (Republic of Moldova) (interpretation from French): Allow me first to convey to you, Mr. President, the heartfelt congratulations of the Republic of Moldova on your election and to wish you every success in performing your important duties.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express once again my gratitude and my country's gratitude to the participants in this forum. It was thanks to their support that the Republic of Moldova, more than six months ago, became a member of the great family of the United Nations and is now able, in that new capacity, to add its efforts to those of other States in promoting the noble values and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations.

I believe that this lofty rostrum of the United Nations General Assembly is the best place to analyse, even if briefly, the processes and transformations we are witnessing today and to discuss our common problems.

Beyond doubt, our civilization is undergoing profound and dynamic changes, and for that reason it is acquiring a new quality, a different content. The collapse of communism, the end of the cold war and the fall of the Soviet empire, followed by the appearance of many new independent States, whose peoples cherish freedom and democracy, are all changes of great importance for the future of mankind.

At the same time, we are witnessing a constant deterioration of some global problems, such as the appearance of new regional conflicts which threaten the internal stability of those States and which also affect international security. It is clear that those problems and the solutions to

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

them require the concerted efforts of the entire international community. Accordingly, the United Nations, the most representative international body, has an essential role to play as a universal centre for our collective action.

Regarding the revitalization of the United Nations and its restructuring to reflect recent events, I believe that as the guarantor of international peace and stability, the United Nations should expand its efforts for peace by improving its peace-keeping machinery, by stepping up its activities in the field of preventive diplomacy and by working out new, more effective machinery to coordinate actions aimed at enhancing respect for the norms of international law and ensuring the security and interests of small States such as my own country.

I am convinced that today, more than ever before the United Nations is capable of resolving the problems confronting the world community. It is through such action that the great principles of the Charter - which during the time of the cold war remained merely ideals - can be effectively implemented and respected.

The United Nations, which in earlier days was a forum for ideological polemics, is now becoming a body for international cooperation, a highly authoritative body inspired by a profound constructive spirit. We are fully convinced that the admission of new States to the United Nations family means a mutual responsibility for them and for the United Nations.

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

The events that led to the incorporation of the Baltic countries - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - following the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact are well known. Following that treaty, which had been imposed by force and has since been declared null and void by the parliament of the former USSR, the territory of my country was annexed and subjected to forced assimilation aimed at making us forget our Latin origins and become part of "the Soviet people".

The proclamation of our Republic's independence and sovereignty and its admission to membership in this world Organization opened the way to our freedom - with due regard, of course, for the strict observance of the norms and principles of law accepted in international practice. It is in that context that I wish to state that our goal is to advance towards a model of social organization in our Republic which will match the high standards developed by mankind in the socio-economic, juridical, political, spiritual and other fields.

The year 1991 marked the beginning of the existence of independent States with different socio-political and economic systems in the territory of the former USSR. Each of them is seeking ways and means to build a State based on law and the institutions and machinery appropriate for a market economy.

We believe that the international community's support should be conceived and adapted to suit the actual conditions existing in each newly independent country. For that reason, with a view to supporting the specific reforms for the transitional period, the efforts of the United Nations and of its specialized agencies will achieve positive results only if they are coordinated with the socio-economic programmes devised and promoted by those countries. The recent admission of the Republic of Moldova to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank guarantees the success of the

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

reforms and also gives substantial support to our young State, which is firmly committed to a process of democratic development.

However, the conflict unleased in the eastern parts of Moldova is a major obstacle to the promotion of our economic reforms and to the democracy to which we are committed.

The pro-communist imperialistic forces constituted by the representatives of the old "nomenklatura" - the military-industrial complex and the higher echelons of the former Soviet army - have unleashed a full-fledged war against the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova in order to separate its districts situated on the left bank of the Dniester.

At the same time the creation of guards' units, which also include mercenaries from other States, and the involvement in the conflict of the Fourteenth Army, which is under the jurisdiction of the Government of the Russian Federation, are flagrant violations of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and of the norms of international law, constituting open aggression against our young State.

We believe that this conflict can be resolved at the regional level, but there must also be active participation by the United Nations.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his efforts to end the conflict. Following his initiative, a United Nations mission paid two visits to my country in the last three months to investigate the situation.

On 21 July 1992, motivated by a sincere desire to put an end to the hostilities, the President of my country signed with the President of the Russian Federation the Agreement on principles for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in those districts of the Republic of Moldova which were

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

involved. The Agreement had some positive effects: there was a cease-fire, as well as a disengagement of the armed forces involved in the conflict. Similarly, because of the presence of peace-keeping forces, human lives have been spared. Nevertheless, the situation is still tense. The imperialistic separatist and pro-communist forces do not comply with their obligations to the letter. They are continuing to consolidate their own positions so that the dismemberment of the trans-Dniester territories of the Republic of Moldova has now become a fait accompli.

The constitutionally established juridical and administrative organs of the Republic of Moldova in that area have been forced to leave their premises. Parallel with this, organs of the so-called Moldavi Republic of the Dniester have been set up. In that area, there are frequent violations of human rights. The Moldovan population, in particular the representatives of the local authorities as well as veterans, has been the victim of an extensive campaign of psychological and physical persecution. People who do not support the separatist policy are dismissed and many displaced persons who have returned to their homes have found them occupied by mercenaries.

Nothwithstanding the provisions of the Agreement, former guards are included in the peace-keeping forces, and this has led to acts of violence against civilians. People living in the eastern districts of the Republic still possess a large quantity of weapons.

For the reasons I have described, I emphasize that there is a need for the permanent presence of a group of United Nations observers and also of some human-rights experts in the Republic of Moldova to analyse the situation on the scene.

From an analysis of the causes and development of the conflict, we can conclude that one of the factors that have contributed and still contribute to

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

the destabilization of the situation is the presence of foreign military forces in our territory. We must state with regret that the Moldovan-Russian negotiations concerning the withdrawal of the Fourteenth Army on the terms set for that withdrawal have been hampered by the representatives of the Russian Federation, who are equivocating about the negotiations and consequently about the withdrawal of that army of occupation.

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

Furthermore, assertions to the effect that the Fourteenth Army can act as a guarantor of peace are not justified. It is an army of occupation, which, as recent events have shown, is a permanent source of tension and conflict, and the deployment of so-called peace-keeping forces belies its supposed status of peace guarantor. The technical reasons that have been adduced are likewise inexplicable. If the political will exists, the 4,000 or so military personnel can easily be withdrawn.

For the resolution of this matter, we expect much from the democratic forces of Russia, which could demonstrate that country's devotion to democratic values. In the present extremely complex situation it would be very useful to have the support of the United Nations with a view to securing guaranteed political cooperation and a demonstration of genuine political will on the part of those involved, particularly Russia.

We are convinced that the universal prestige of the United Nations and your support would make possible the unconditional and immediate withdrawal of the Fourteenth Army and an easing of the conflict before it degenerates into a conflagration with unforeseeable consequences. Accordingly, I welcome the fact that one item of the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly is an amendment, submitted by the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, on the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territory of the Baltic States. However, I hope that that problem - which, as I have already pointed out, is of great importance to my country - will be discussed as part of a wider debate which also deals with the withdrawal of the foreign armed forces now in my country's territory.

The Government and Parliament of the Republic of Moldova are aware of the fact that orienting domestic legislation towards international standards in

(Mr. Tiu, Republic of Moldova)

the field of human rights is the only effective means of consolidating the democratic process. The country I represent has acceded to the main international instruments on human rights. The supreme legislative forum of our Republic will soon complete its preparation of the new constitution, and that will greatly enhance the process of building a State based on law and a pluralistic democracy.

Peace and cooperation are the two main pillars of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova. Accordingly, security problems in my country are very important. Geopolitically, Moldova is a meeting-point between eastern and western Europe. For that reason, we seek to establish friendly, cooperative relations with all States, without belonging to any military bloc.

I should like to take this opportunity to convey cordial congratulations to Georgia, to Slovenia, to Croatia and to Bosnia and Herzegovina on becoming Members of the United Nations.

We are convinced that only human solidarity can promote democracy throughout the world, put an end to conflicts and stop the violations of internationally accepted norms of behaviour. The Republic of Moldova is deeply devoted to the ideals of freedom, democracy and human dignity, which are the main tenets of its policy.

Mr. BERENGER (Mauritius): I bring to the General Assembly the greetings of the people and Government of Mauritius. I assure you, Sir, of our unstinted cooperation and support in the discharge of the important task that you have assumed upon your election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. I join those who have already congratulated you on this singular honour, which is also a tribute to your country.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

I should like also to offer my felicitations to all the other officers of the Assembly and to wish them success as they take the reins for the current session.

In addition, I want to put on record our appreciation of the masterly manner in which your distinguished predecessor conducted the affairs of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, which was held at a time when the most crucial transformation on which the Organization has embarked was taking place. He can take pride in the commendable achievements of the Organization under his wise guidance.

It is an equally pleasant duty to welcome the 13 States of Eastern Europe that have joined our ranks as members of this comity of free nations. Their membership in the United Nations can only reinforce the foundations of the Organization and make a positive contribution to the new agenda that it has assumed.

The beginning of the current session of the General Assembly follows a year which was very eventful on the international scene but, more important, within the Organization itself. Indeed, during the past year the United Nations has witnessed, and in some cases has triggered, major developments. When I addressed the Assembly during the general debate last year, I referred to the selection of a new man to take the helm of the Organization. I said that we were in a new era and that the new Secretary-General would have to tackle a different agenda and face new challenges as we approached the twenty-first century. I also said that it would be appropriate to have a Secretary-General from the South and, indeed, from Africa. In that respect we have been served well.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

It is therefore with pride that I record as one of the important developments in our system the brilliant choice of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali as Secretary-General, which has kindled in many a Member nation fresh hope that its just aspirations will be addressed and fulfilled.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali's election to lead this world body has been welcomed with elation by the international community, and with great expectation by those of us who are from Africa. We take pride in the fact that this wise man of proven distinguished leadership and excellence is an Egyptian son of Africa.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

Mauritius would like to associate itself with all those who have commended the Secretary-General on the laudable actions he has undertaken so far in his bid to initiate the much-needed reform of the Organization. It is conceded that reform of an organization like the United Nations is not an easy task, but it is more than overdue, especially at a time when the cold war has definitely been laid to rest. The drop of the curtain on the cold-war era has brought the reform and restructuring of the United Nations within the realm of possibility. The task is mammoth for sure, but it is one that is imperative, given the new priorities on the international agenda.

The Secretary-General deserves all the encouragement possible in his endeavours along this difficult path. His task becomes even more exacting when it is placed in the perspective of the forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the Organization in 1995, which, incidentally, is also the year when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will come up for renewal. The years leading up to 1995 are, to our mind, absolutely crucial for the United Nations. Now, more than ever before, it is of paramount importance that the United Nations address, with renewed vigour but within the parameters of the Charter, the various and complex issues that preoccupy the international community.

It is with those preoccupations in mind that we in Mauritius have welcomed the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace" submitted under the mandate issued at the end of the historic and first-of-its-kind summit meeting of the Security Council held on 31 January last. We share the Secretary-General's optimism when he states:

"A conviction has grown, among nations large and small, that an opportunity has been regained to achieve the great objectives of the

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

Charter - a United Nations capable of maintaining international peace and security, of securing justice and human rights and of promoting, in the words of the Charter, 'social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.'" (A/47/277, para. 3)

Yes, we agree that this opportunity must not be allowed to pass, must not be squandered. It is for us Member States to ensure that the Charter is strengthened to create the appropriate conditions for the Organization to assume the role to which we want it to aspire. Our faith in the United Nations should be reinforced, and we should match our words with action to give the innovative structures proposed by the Secretary-General a chance to work, and thus move the Organization out of the paralysis that characterized it during the cold-war era. The first steps out of this paralysis have been taken, but there are still miles to go. In our endeavours to achieve the redefined objectives meant to ensure international peace and security we must be wary that no attempt is made, deliberate or otherwise, to overstretch the interpretation of the Charter to suit any hidden political or even economic agendas.

The universal membership of the United Nations should make it possible for the international community to discuss with equity, fairness and justice any issue that is likely to jeopardize or bring into question the atmosphere of international peace and security in which we aspire to live. In that perspective, I should like to commit the support of Mauritius to the proposals of the Secretary-General with respect to preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and confidence-building measures envisaged for the United Nations and its executing organs. But, as the Secretary-General has said in his annual report, the demands on the United Nations are not matched by an

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

equivalent provision of resources, expecially by those who can well afford such resources. The Secretary-General's report informs us that since 1988 13 new peace-keeping operations have been organized and that the Organization is at present administering 12 peace-keeping operations in various regions of the world, operations that are estimated to cost close to $3 billion in the current 12-month period.

If we expect the United Nations to fulfil the new role that we are designing for it we must collectively ensure that we provide as well the financial support that it requires. It is only with secure financial foundations that the United Nations will be able to respond adequately and satisfactorily to our aspirations. I should therefore like to appeal to fellow Member States to honour their financial obligations within a reasonable time and thus remove the current pecuniary constraints faced by the Organization. I must also add that my country, which is among those Member States that religiously pay up their annual assessed contributions, will give favourable consideration to the Secretary-General's proposals to deal with the cash-flow problems, as outlined in his report.

I should not like to leave the issue of reform of the Organization without joining my voice with those that have called for a review of the responsibilities of the Security Council in this changed environment of ours. We must be cautious lest we fall easy prey to the dangers that a unipolar world can trigger. It is evident that a new world order is emerging. Let us commit ourselves not to take a limited view of this new world order or, indeed, give it a limited concept. We welcome the ever-increasing activities of the Security Council to the extent that, as the Secretary-General informs us in his report, during the first 7 months of this year, 46 resolutions were

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

adopted by the Council compared to 14 in all in 1987. We should, however, beware of allowing ambiguities to crop up in those resolutions, ambiguities that may make it dangerously possible for various interpretations to be given to those resolutions, the implementation of which may perpetuate the situation of conflicts that unfortunately pervades our globe. Indeed, criticism has been levelled at the Council for its seemingly ad hoc approach to matters relating to international security. There is therefore a need to define set considerations, which, in turn, would determine what situations constitute threats to international peace and security requiring action by the Security Council.

Furthermore, it has been rightly and forcefully argued that while a more vigorous and dynamic role is being envisaged for the Security Council, this magnified mandate of the Council should be matched by enhanced transparency and democracy. We fully concur with the Secretary-General, who, in the introduction to his report, while arguing that the current international situation rquires an Organization capable of dealing comprehensively with the economic, social, environmental and political dimensions of human development, underlines that:

> "This requires the full application of the principles of democracy within the family of nations and within our Organization." (A/47/1, para. 9)

In this context, we await with keen interest the results of the deliberations of the high-level Working Group for the Restructuring of the United Nations set up by the recent summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Earlier on I said that while 1995 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, it will also be the year when the Treaty on the

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will come up for review and renewal. Last year in my address to the Assembly, I dwelt at length on the issue of disarmament, principally because it constitutes - especially to us smaller States of the world - the only path to lasting security. I expressed the hope then that in the wake of the dramatic announcements made by President Gorbachev, the leader of the then-Soviet Union, President Bush and President Mitterrand the disarmament race would be confirmed. It is with deep satisfaction that my country notes the tremendous progress achieved over the past year in that race. We welcome the vote by the United States Senate two months ago for a nine-month moratorium on United States nuclear testing and an end to all such tests by September 1996, which came in the wake of the French and Russian moratoriums. Those developments lead us to assert that the time has now come for all of us seriously to consider a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, the more so in that the international community hailed the agreement by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin in Washington D.C. in June of this year to cut the number of long-range nuclear-missile warheads on the United States and Russian sides by about two thirds.

Another encouraging event in the field of disarmament has been the promise kept by China and France, which have deposited their instruments of accession to the non-proliferation Treaty. Speaking of that Treaty brings me to reiterate the dire need for an informal dialogue to be undertaken between now and 1995 between States Parties to the Treaty and non-party States, with a view to addressing in the best possible way those provisions of the Treaty that have so far prevented it from acquiring a universal dimension.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

We also look forward to the establishment in 1993 of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 nuclear non-proliferation Treaty renewal Conference and are confident that it will have fruitful and conclusive deliberations.

We applaud the progress that has been achieved in the formulation of a chemical weapons convention and congratulate the negotiators in Geneva who have put in arduous hours to ensure that the target date of 1992 for the completion of such a convention be met. I am pleased to inform the Assembly that Mauritius will co-sponsor with others the resolution on that convention and will be among its original signatories when it comes up for ratification.

We believe that, with the end of the cold war and in this new era, complete nuclear disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction are no longer a dream but are now very much in the realm of reality. On the way towards that ideal objective, Mauritius will support all plausible initiatives, including the elaboration of a convention providing for a "cut off" in the production of fissile nuclear material for weapons purposes, as well as an international convention on negative nuclear security assurances.

While we welcome the positive elements in the field of disarmament, some of which I have just mentioned, we deplore the continued movement of highly dangerous nuclear material on land and on the high seas. We have also taken cognizance with grave concern of the movement of plutonium and other toxic waste across the world. We exhort the countries involved in such trade to refrain from such actions and pay heed to the genuine concerns that have been expressed and continue to be voiced by the international community.

Mauritius deplores the fact that some private companies based in Europe are shamefully exploiting the situations of disarray and complete chaos

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

prevailing in Somalia to dump toxic waste on its territory, thereby adding to the calamities that are already claiming a heavy toll of human lives. The international community should, with a single voice, condemn such abominable actions. It is indeed regrettable that while we, within the context of the new role of the United Nations and other regional organizations, are trying to resolve the conflicts that beset the world, others, with no qualms whatsoever, are exploiting those conflicts for their own material benefit.

As regards the situation of conflicts throughout the world, a sad sight unfolds before our eyes. In certain areas, especially after the historic collapse of one ideological bloc, new dangers loom heavily over entire populations enmeshed in ethnic and nationalist bickering. Their release from long years of repression seems to have given way to an unfortunate lust for self-destruction.

We are particularly concerned at the utter lack of consideration for the value of human life and property that has become an everyday occurrence in certain parts of Eastern Europe. It is very difficult for us to accept that ethnic, religious, and nationalist feelings could be so strong as to render entire populations expendable, or that political leaders should encourage such murderous and genocidal sprees when it ought to have been possible for them to thrash out their differences peacefully through civilized negotiations. The sadness of the matter is that, while the various political groups - often motivated by a misguided and exaggerated sense of territorial expansion, turn whole areas into wargrounds of desolation and lay to ruin entire cities and towns, it is the innocent civilian population that has to hold the thorny end of the stick. I do not need to retell the countless stories of atrocities being perpetrated daily in many parts of our world to convince anybody of the

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

kind of manmade calamity that afflicts us. Every God-given day is turned into a nightmare by the needless killings perpetrated in the name of supremacy.

On the one hand, we do everything in our power to rid ourselves collectively of oppressive regimes and superficial ideologies; but on the other, once that goal is achieved we turn the guns on one another. Entire nations have crumbled over the past few months, principally in Europe and Africa. Entire populations have been decimated. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Somalia are indeed sad and disgraceful examples of the kind of cruelty and brutality of which man is capable. On both counts, the international community has been shamefully slow in addressing the issues with a view to bringing an end to the senseless killings that have characterized the daily evolution of the situation in those countries, whose victims have been the innocent and helpless populations.

What a sad reflection this is on humanity. For months we have remained impassive to the images of desolation and despair, of emaciated fellow beings too sick and too weak to move, of mutilated people degenerating into apparitions of skin and bones - images brought to us in the comfort of our living rooms on the small screen. The Somali human rights disaster - for indeed that is what it is - has been left to simmer for months unheeded. This brings me to address another area of priority on the international agenda - the issue of human rights.

It has been known since time immemorial that man as an individual has a capacity to go to extremes. As capable as he is of displaying a depthless sense of compassion and love, he is just as able to manifest a diametrically opposed and excruciating sense of cruelty and oppression towards his fellow being. But when such harassment and privation of man's basic rights become

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

institutionalized, it is a matter of distress that should be the concern of the international community.

One cannot talk of economic development and progress on the one hand without on the other hand ensuring that man - who remains at the centre of development and therefore of progress - is not prevented from enjoying his dignity, nor divested of his basic freedoms and rights. The promotion and upholding of human rights should remain high on the international community's list of priorities. In fact, as the Secretary-General reminds us in his report, the Charter of the United Nations makes the promotion of human rights one of our priority objectives. Constant dialogue with a view to defusing any situation in which human rights have been breached should be encouraged and welcomed at all levels.

Human rights are indivisible. Political, social, civil and economic rights are fundamental to humanity in its quest for progress and its endeavours towards the economic and social improvement of its environment. That is why we in Mauritius staunchly support those who believe that concern for human rights and the promotion and defence thereof cannot be considered as interference in the internal affairs of a State where that State displays an arrogant disregard for the basic rights and freedoms of its people. We believe that violations and gross abuse of human rights should be decried forcefully. In the same manner that the international community has with one voice condemned apartheid as a human rights abuse, it should be free and honest enough to point the finger at those who continue to thwart the efforts of man to assert his dignity. If we can without restraint declare ourselves against such scourges as apartheid, racism and xenophobia, we should equally be at full liberty to denounce those who - for archaic or obscure reasons but

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

often out of self-interest - deny their fellow beings the freedom to exercise their basic rights.

We therefore condemn without reserve those who, for political expediency and/or survival, find it necessary in the normal course of events to deprive their people of civil and political rights to the extent of imprisoning and even exterminating those who militate for such rights. We also view with grave concern those cases in which human rights monitors, local or international, have been arrested, jailed, or even killed while trying to come to the assistance of populations that are victims of human rights deprivation.

However, we should like to appeal to the donor community to ensure that, while withholding or cutting off aid and assistance to any country or region as a punitive measure against regimes guilty of gross violations and abuse of human rights, nothing be done to exacerbate the plight of innocent people whose lives are already miserable as a result of their being deprived of their basic rights. After all, human feelings and therefore humanitarian compassion should transcend political considerations. A people afflicted by severe human rights abuse should not be made to endure further suffering by being deprived of much-needed assistance.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

With a view to addressing serious human-rights-abuse situations in certain territories in a positive and constructive manner, we are fully supportive of the idea that the General Assembly or the Security Council should be able to entrust the Secretary-General with mounting fact-finding missions to those territories, either at the request of the Government thereof or at the behest of the appropriate organ of the United Nations itself - subject, of course, to prior arrangements having been made with the States concerned.

We must here commend the work done by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights Committee, the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the various non-governmental organizations which have been playing a crucial role in the protection and enhancement of human rights. We must also place on record our appreciation for those States that have legislated appropriately to give human rights the protection of the law and make their enjoyment a matter of course.

In the context of the international concern for human rights, we hope that the opportunity provided by the second World Conference on Human Rights, to be held in Vienna in June 1993, will be seized by all concerned to pledge themselves to the universal upholding and promotion of human rights. Respect for human rights must become a cardinal characteristic of all Governments. A passionate debate is currently on regarding the relationship between democracy, development and human rights, as indeed on the issue of human rights and sovereignty. We believe that the 1993 Conference will be the perfect platform to debate these issues sufficiently for universal norms thereon to emerge. I should like to seize this opportunity to wish the Preparatory Committee in Geneva success in the work it has started.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

The upsurge of racism and xenophobia in certain countries of the West is also a matter of great concern to us, and we consider the discrimination in the treatment of migrant workers and foreign students in those countries a human-rights violation. It is a matter of deep regret that some countries that have come to the fore as champions of human rights should themselves be found wanting on that level. Let them put their human-rights house in order first before decrying and acting on violations beyond their frontiers.

Similarly, some countries that are quick to denounce human-rights abuse do not always abide by the consistency that is required in such matters. We firmly believe that the same approach should be applied in all cases of alleged human-rights abuse, whenever they may occur. No political or economic interest should interfere with that approach. Picking and choosing between countries will only make a farce of the human-rights issue.

I now wish to touch briefly on a few issues that are of specific importance to us in Mauritius. The unfortunate turn of events in South Africa, in particular the Boipatong massacre and the Bisho killings, has dampened the ardour with which we were anticipating the accession of the Republic of South Africa to the fold of free and democratic countries of the world. We call on all the parties concerned in the South African arena, and especially those currently in power, to recast their bearings in as positive a way as possible to ensure that the objective we dream of for that country is achieved in the not-too-distant future, so that every citizen of the nation that will emerge can start working towards its reconstruction based on freedom, peace, equality and justice. We are hopeful that the wisdom of the leaders involved and the encouragement of the international community will make it possible for the stalled negotiations to be resumed, for the benefit of all South African citizens.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

In neighbouring Mozambique, a breakthrough had appeared at hand as all parties concerned declared their readiness to work for the progress of that country in the wake of the recent negotiations aimed at ending years of civil strife. We hope that last-minute snags will be overcome in a spirit of compromise so that peace can at last prevail in the better interests of the population.*

Similarly, we are encouraged by the ongoing Middle East peace talks. We must, however, constantly remind ourselves that the crux of the matter remains an equitable and just solution to the Palestinian issue.

The scourge of famine and drought that continues to take its toll of lives on the African continent, especially in its southern part and in the Horn of Africa, is a matter of deep concern. We would like to see the international community act more urgently to stop the dreadful loss of life that has become a daily occurrence in many countries of that region. Mauritius is ready to contribute within the possibility of its means to any action aimed at alleviating the plight of those unfortunate and often forgotten souls.

Another issue that is of great importance to us in Mauritius is the need to respect the territorial integrity of nations. I should here like to place once more on record the appreciation of my country to all those countries that have consistently expressed their support of our sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia. We should like to inform the Assembly that we have resumed exchanges with the United Kingdom on this issue.

---

* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Berenger, Mauritius)

In my address to the Assembly last year, I expressed the hope that the leaders of Fiji would redress the situation that prevails there by amending its present Constitution to the satisfaction of all the citizens of that sister island nation. Mauritius draws comfort from recent assertions by the Prime Minister of that country that he is morally committed to reviewing the Constitution of the land. We are confident that the Fijian Government will now act on the basis of those assertions and make it once more possible for the Fijian citizens, irrespective of the community to which they belong, to work hand in hand for the progress of their nation.

Similarly, we commend the authorities of that other neighbourly sister island of Sri Lanka for the efforts being deployed to put an end to the unfortunate strife that has ravaged their country and taken such a heavy toll of human lives. We are confident that with a reasonable degree of compromise on all sides, peace and harmony will prevail anew there.

Finally, allow me to reiterate the continued faith of my country in the collective wisdom of our Organization and pledge anew our unstinting support for its laudable efforts, under the skilled and enlightened leadership of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to address the political, social and economic obstacles that remain strewn on the path to harmonious coexistence and global progress.

Mr. ABU JABER (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure to extend to you, on behalf of my country, Sir, warm congratulations on your election to the post of President of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. You represent a friendly nation with which my country has ties of friendship and cooperation. Your wealth of experience and competence will help bring our work to a successful conclusion and achieve the desired results.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

It also gives me great pleasure to extend our thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, who, with his abundant skill, experience and patience, was able to conduct the business of our past session with particular success.

May I also have the pleasure, at the beginning of my statement, to express my sincere thanks and deep gratitude to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, for his unremitting efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations and its Secretariat and make it more effective in the service of international peace and security, as well as in facing up to the challenges and addressing the issues that have arisen with the end of the cold-war era. I would also like to commend his well thought-out and comprehensive report on the work of the Organization which indicates the new and auspicious direction of the United Nations under his guidance.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

The forty-seventh session is convened at a time when several new States have been admitted to membership of the United Nations, thereby enhancing the universality of this Organization. I welcome all of them and look forward to their contribution in the pursuit of the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Given its awareness of the interdependent character of the world we live in and its belief in dialogue, diplomacy and negotiations as the ideal and, indeed, the only means of resolving international disputes, my country looks forward to cooperation with all Members of the United Nations with a view to moving human society to yet higher levels of progress, stability and growth.

Over the past few years, the world has undergone many historic and unprecedented changes which have tended to encourage democratization and the promotion of freedoms, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the pursuit of progress and development. While the end of the ideological confrontation between East and West has brought about a new state of international harmony at a certain level, yet it seems that the conflict was a lid that covered a great deal of smouldering embers under the ashes. The confrontation had hardly ended when certain primitive tendencies reared their heads. Some of those tendencies are tribal, some are ethnic and others are religious. None of them augurs well for a very rosy future for many regions of the world. This is a situation that calls for collective action under the auspices of this Organization to rationalize the transition, and thereby, to contain those tensions, in their various forms, within acceptable humanitarian contexts.

Our world is now going through a phase of transition from one era to another, where the changes are taking place at an astonishingly rapid pace that has left behind many cultural, social and political principles that many

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

groups in human society continue to hang on to as if they were eternal. This makes it imperative that we act to create a mechanism to facilitate and manage the transition, which is, perhaps, the most difficult period in the lives of communities as well as in the lives of the individuals.

There is enough wisdom in this world and in the Secretariat of this Organization in particular, to make us in Jordan look forward to a better future. Jordan does not accept the argument that modern technology, which has compressed the world into a global village, has led to the opposite of what was expected of it. We do not subscribe to the view of those who maintain that it has led to ideological ossification and has bred an attitude of indifference to the pains, hopes and aspirations of others.

Proceeding from this, Jordan, a State that may be small in size but big in leadership, wishes to share with you a futuristic vision of a world that now stands at the threshold of the twenty-first century. We feel that we may be justified in this by the fact that we are a State that, since its inception, has committed itself to the straight path of justice and pursued a policy that eschewed violence and extremism. It has always maintained a rational, moderate, middle-of-the-road approach in dealing with both its domestic and its foreign affairs. Hence, Jordan has in effect become an oasis of stability in a turbulent region where emotionalism, extremism and ideological as well as physical violence are still rampant. Perhaps the most significant outcome of this policy has been the establishment in my country of a solid democratic system based on political pluralism.

Jordan, which believes in collective action and in the United Nations principles, as well as in a world of peace, security and stability, takes pride in the confidence placed in it in being called upon to contribute troops to the peace-keeping forces in a number of areas of tension in the world: in

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

Croatia and Cambodia, in addition to observers in Angola and Somalia. My country thus believes in the need to support the United Nations to enable it to carry out effectively the essential functions set forth in the Charter, namely, the promotion of peace and security all over the world and the provision of the means for the welfare and progress of its peoples.

We stress that the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat under the leadership of the new Secretary-General, who is well known for his patience, vision and extensive knowledge, together with the political will of Member States and the yearning of peoples for a better world, should combine to form the basis for effective measures in the field of preventive diplomacy for peacemaking and peace-keeping and the process of post-war peace building. The "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), prepared by the Secretary-General, is indeed a very valuable contribution because of the in-depth and comprehensive analysis it offers and the set of scenarios and assumptions envisioned for United Nations work with a view to enhancing its efficiency and revitalizing its various agencies and organizations with a view to forging a new world of peace and prosperity.

Allow me, in dealing with the most important international issues, to address the dispute in the Middle East region and its core issue, the Palestine question. My country, Jordan, has indeed lived the tragedy of the Palestinian people from the beginning and, with its limited resources, has borne the brunt of its economic, social and political repercussions.

We have noticed recently that this problem has had its share of the effects of the many political changes and international breakthroughs that have been brought about by the end of the cold war era, in that the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question have taken a positive turn in line with those changes. This started with the Madrid Peace Conference.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

Jordan has joined in this peace process because of its firm commitment to the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region, and because of its belief in the justice of the Palestinian cause and in the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to establish their own independent State on their native soil, as well as in the right of every State in the region to live in peace and security within recognized boundaries. Those premises and objectives of the peace process are based on international resolutions, most importantly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which affirm the land-for-peace equation of returning the occupied territories, including Jordanian territory and the Syrian Golan, in exchange for peace, and which also affirm the necessity of Israeli withdrawal from Arab Al-Quds.

We in Jordan believe that peace is an objective that our generation ought to pursue. We also believe that in order for peace to be real and lasting, it must be based on international legality and must be just, comprehensive and, thereby, acceptable to future generations. The peace we believe in is peace that would be an incentive to all peoples of our region to move ahead on the road of economic, social and cultural development in an atmosphere of security, stability, freedom and democracy, and in the context of cooperation and understanding, resulting in well-being and prosperity for the peoples of the region as a whole. Justice, comprehensiveness and durability are the bases on which peace in the Middle East should be established. These bases are organically interrelated and inseparable.

It is regrettable, however, that while we are engaged in direct peace negotiations with Israel, it persists in its acts of repression and oppression of every type against the Palestinian people under its occupation. It is a

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

strange paradox indeed that while the parties to the conflict are negotiating on the basis of international legality, Israel continues its illegal practices, expecially the building of new settlements and the beefing up of existing ones.

It is true that the new Israeli Government has taken certain seemingly positive actions with regard to its policies in the occupied territories. Those actions are, however, inadequate. We, and the world as a whole, are still waiting for Israel to translate its words into deeds. The classification of settlements into security and political settlements is a ploy that aims at breaking up into pieces the principle of legality, which is indivisible. The release of some detainees while thousands of others languish in jail, will not alter the degree of repression to which the Palestinian people are being subjected.

If the Israeli Government truly wishes to be serious in its desire to achieve peace and wants to demonstrate good will, it has first to commit itself to the application of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied territories and to halt completely the building of settlements - all settlements.

With regard to Lebanon, Israel continues to refuse to comply with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which calls for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Accordingly, we call for unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all Lebanese territory and call for solidarity by the international community with Lebanon to help the Lebanese Government in rebuilding its economic and social structures and enabling its people to achieve the security, welfare and prosperity they yearn for.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

The various Security Council resolutions concerning Iraq have placed the State of Iraq and its people in a situation different from that they were in in 1990 and 1991. The suffering of the Iraqi people, which is known to all, and the threat of dismemberment and instability - not intended by the Security Council resolutions - make it imperative that we view Iraq in terms of that new situation. Proceeding from this, Jordan - which complies with Security Council resolutions and looks forward to putting an end to the consequences of the Gulf crisis by peaceful means - wishes to emphasize its desire for action to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and to preserve the territorial integrity of Iraq as an integral Gulf entity. It will not be in anyone's interest, regionally or internationally, to partition Iraq or to prolong the suffering of its people. Also, it will not be in anyone's interest that security and stability should not prevail in the Gulf region.

While we have great hopes that the consequences of the Gulf crisis will be eliminated, we regret to see the beginnings of a new crisis: the dispute that has erupted recently between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran is denying to the United Arab Emirates its sovereign rights over the islands of Abu Mousa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb. Jordan would like to reiterate in this regard its principled position of respect for the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. We call on the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates to reach a peaceful solution through dialogue, based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, in order to maintain good neighbourliness and consolidate peace and security in the Gulf region.

The tragic situation of the Somali people poses a difficult challenge to the United Nations and to the conscience of humanity. This challenge requires

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

an immediate and effective response. The images of death, starvation and homelessness that fill our television screens cry out to the conscience of the world to help put an end to them. My country's delegation, while appreciating and commending the incessant efforts of the new Secretary-General on both the political and the relief levels, emphasizes the need for prompt and effective action by the United Nations and the international community to adopt an integrated plan that would put an end to the tragedy of Somalia. Such a plan should include a cease-fire, the implementation of an integral programme of action to ensure the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies to the various regions and moves to convene a conference on reconciliation, national unity and transition to help rebuild the country's infrastructure. We must also deal with the regional consequences of the crisis: the influx of Somali refugees into neighbouring countries and the resulting instability this has caused in the Horn of Africa.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

The tragic situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to deteriorate and is taking a sinister turn. To do nothing about it would undermine the very concepts of democracy, civilized behaviour and collective security. Reports continue to pour in, telling of continued violations of international humanitarian law against the people of this young nation. Its territory continues to be swallowed up bit by bit, and attempts are continuing to change its demographic composition through ferocious and atrocious "ethnic cleansing" campaigns. It is both painful and dangerous that all this should continue despite the relevant Security Council resolutions. There is indeed an urgent need to find a prompt and peaceful solution to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law. There is nothing that would justify in any way failure by the United Nations and the international community to take prompt and effective measures to put an end to aggression, to ensure the unity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to preserve its political independence and full sovereignty over its entire territory, and to annul all the results and consequences of aggression. We trust that the peace process led by the European Community and its member States, in cooperation with the United Nations, to achieve a peaceful settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, will give all these elements priority in its programme of work. I can only express, in this regard, my country's high appreciation of the tireless efforts made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretariat to make the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina a success and to expand the relief operations which they are undertaking.

The principles which my country upholds and which govern its positions on all international conflicts are based on the belief in the right of peoples to self-determination, in the principle of non-interference in the internal

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

affairs of States and of rejection of occupation in any shape or form. It was in this context that my country welcomed the process of reconciliation in Cambodia on the basis of the Paris accords which were signed by all the Cambodian parties. My country attaches great importance to the implementation, by all parties, of those accords and the discharge of all the commitments contained therein as those commitments constitute the guarantee and the proper mechanism for a peaceful and comprehensive settlement that will restore peace to this war-torn country within the framework of national reconciliation in a united, independent and sovereign Cambodia.

As for the question of Korea, my country's delegation would like to voice its complete satisfaction in regard to the progress of the dialogue and high-level talks going on between the two Koreas and the resultant agreements aimed at building mutual confidence between them and reuniting the Korean peninsula in a framework of national unity.

With regard to the question of Cyprus, my country values the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who has maintained the good offices which started in 1975. We follow with close interest and great appreciation the ongoing talks under his auspices and with his encouragement between the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities with the aim of achieving a peaceful settlement of this problem.

Jordan shares with the rest of the world the satisfaction felt at the results of the referendum organized by the Government of South Africa in March. Those results were a constructive prelude to end the policy of apartheid in South Africa and augur well for the achievement by the conflicting groups of a comprehensive political settlement in a democratic system, which would put an end to minority rule. The agreement reached a few days ago between Mr. Mandela and President De Klerk on the resumption of talks

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

following the deplorable violence of last June, renews hope that all parties will cooperate in writing a new constitution and reaching an early political solution, thus putting an end to the policy of apartheid and allowing democracy to prevail.

My Government deplores the bloody events that took place recently in Afghanistan and visited yet more suffering on the Afghani people. Therefore Jordan, while wishing the Afghani Government success in consolidating security and stability and in reconstructing the infrastructure devastated by the civil war, supports that Government's request for assistance from the United Nations and the international community.

The East-West bipolarity of the cold war era has disappeared with the end of that war. There has surfaced, however, a new North-South bipolarity that was overshadowed previously by the world's preoccupation with the ideological conflict between East and West. We hope that efforts to deal with this phenomenon, which is primarily economic and social, will take the form of a positive and constructive dialogue for the benefit of all mankind. The developing South needs the countries of the North; the industrialized North cannot maintain its prosperity and stability without an independent and developed South that would be free from hunger, poverty, and disease and relieved of its heavy burden of debt. The planet on which we live, with all the threats of ecological disruption facing it, cannot enjoy security and safety without cooperation between North and South. Such cooperation is in the interest of all humanity.

If we were to define the new role of the United Nations, it, undoubtedly, would be humanitarian in nature and would aim at protecting and preserving life on the planet, and raising the standard of living of all peoples through

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

the establishment of a new, balanced and equitable world economic order. Our Organization must act to put an end to the historical contradiction that has persisted for centuries between North and South so that the North may discharge the main task of providing new bases and common grounds for a real development of the regions of the South and thus remove the existing distortions and inequalities.

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

It has become quite clear that a common effort for development is essential to move the world gradually forward, if freedom and democracy are really to gain acceptance and if we really want to respect human dignity and eradicate underdevelopment and its concomitant social and health evils, which have assumed terrifying proportions and frequency.

The environment is the common heritage of mankind. Thus, my country believes that its preservation is our common responsibility. We also feel that the developed countries, in accordance with the commitments they took upon themselves at the Rio de Janeiro Conference, must help the developing countries in solving their relevant problems, especially and principally, the problem of poverty. We therefore support the establishment of the committee on sustainable development and look forward to participating in it and in shaping its structure and terms of reference.

If international peace and security are among the main goals the international community strives to achieve, that makes it all the more imperative for us to promote arms limitation, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. One must note in this regard the progress achieved in the limitation of tactical nuclear weapons and the finalization recently at Geneva of the draft Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. As for conventional weapons, the General Assembly resolution adopted at the forty-sixth session on the establishment of a non-discriminatory register in which to record all international weapon transfers was a positive step on the road to getting rid of armaments, provided it is applied with complete impartiality and in an equitable manner that takes into consideration the differences in the needs of countries for armaments. A verification system should be developed, taking into account not only imported weapons but

(Mr. Abu Jaber, Jordan)

also domestically produced weapons, especially in countries that are involved in regional conflicts.

Jordan supports the use of science and technology for disarmament, the development of verification systems, the efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and the establishment of nuclear-free zones, including the Middle East region. Jordan also calls upon all States that have not done so, including Israel, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

In conclusion, I should like to say that, now that the cold war has ended, the world undoubtedly stands at the threshold of a new era, as we can all see. This fact places on the United Nations the responsibility of reinvigorating itself in order to keep pace with the requirements of this new era in a fast-changing world, so that our efforts at the United Nations may become a foundation for a better life. We are quite confident that the Member States are all aware of their problems and the problems of the world and are, therefore, prepared for cooperation and the use of good offices within a democratic United Nations and the efforts of its evolving organs and agencies that are guided by the vision and dedication of the Secretary-General.

Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at this session. In your election can be seen an unequivocal indication of rejoicing at the establishment of democracy in your country.

It is also fitting today for us to welcome the States of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

Uzbekistan to our community of nations. Their participation as Member States guarantees observance of the principle of universality, an essential element of the very life and existence of the Organization.

We congratulate Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to whom my people and country have had numerous occasions to express their esteem and their hopes, as he undertakes his difficult and very important mission as the new Secretary-General, continuing the brilliant work of Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Last year, taking note of the dizzying acceleration of world events, we put forward our views on the consequences of the collapse of what was called the old order that was born during the cold war, and our view regarding the attitude that the international community should assume in the face of the new and emerging international situation. We said - and today we have even more reason to reiterate - that the spectacular changes in the former distribution of power would not necessarily lead us to the heralded new international order, although such changes opened up the possibility of our being able to achieve strict, rigorous observance of the fundamental principles of the Charter. That prospect gave us a sense of realistic optimism with regard to the future, though we never lost sight of all the negative elements in existence today that stand in the way of the full acknowledgement of the existence of a true "order".

The success of the effective functioning of the mechanisms of collective security that were put into operation during the Gulf crisis is not enough. The important point is, essentially, that each and every one of the States of the international community should, in accordance with its capability for action and hence with its responsibilities, adapt its conduct to the

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

principles of the Charter, which are the basic principles of law and ethics; and those principles should be strictly complied with, making of that form of conduct a consistent practice.

This year we find ourselves facing a new and grave quaking of international security as a result of the outbreak in Europe of the most brutal conflict to take place on the old continent since the Second World War. In our view, it is the responsibility of the international community, in the face of that situation, to ensure the finding of a solution that goes beyond the national interests involved and beyond consideration of our geographical distance from or proximity to the conflict.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

We view with grave concern the atrocities that have been committed, the reports of the concentration of civilians in detention camps, as well as the horrendous violations of human rights and the persistent disregard for international humanitarian law that are taking place in that region.

We see how cardinal principles of international law are being violated, such as territorial integrity and sovereignty, which leads to disregard for the true and genuine meaning of self-determination. Furthermore, we view with alarm the extraordinary introduction of the racial factor into international relations and the emergence of the invocation of doctrines such as that of "ethnic cleansing" to justify serious violations of international law and of human rights.

We therefore once again most forcefully reiterate our condemnation of those practices and our exhortation to implement steps collectively worked out, in the context of international law, that enhance the effectiveness of United Nations mechanisms across the board.

The decision adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September as to the status of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in the United Nations was supported by Uruguay. It was the only position that could indeed be taken in the light of the circumstances. This did not involve a case of exclusion, nor a situation such as those envisaged under Articles 5 and 6 in the Charter, but rather involved the finding that it was impossible, on the basis of incontrovertible facts, that that State could automatically take over the seat of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This means that the new State will have to apply for admission as a Member of the United Nations, pursuant to the provisions of Article 4 of the Charter.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The situation in that region, along with the tragedy being endured in Somalia and elsewhere, compels us to reaffirm the duty, based on the principles of solidarity and cooperation, to provide humanitarian aid. That duty, which implies an acknowledgement of the corresponding right, must be conceived of and implemented within the context of international law, without doing violence to other essential principles. Humanitarian aid must be decided upon by competent international bodies, by implementation of law, and must not serve as a cover for disguised or veiled forms of unlawful intervention, whether on an individual or a collective basis.

We welcome the encouraging turn that in recent weeks has been taking place in the talks aimed at bringing the peace process in the Middle East back on track. The traditional and unswerving friendship of the Uruguayan people with the Arab and Jewish peoples, along with the excellent diplomatic relations our Government maintains with the Arab countries and with the State of Israel, are all factors that induce us to lend our vigorous support to the common quest for peace in that region, a peace that must be based on guaranteed security for all the States in the region, on respect for territorial integrity, on the right to self-determination of all peoples and on the full applicability of human rights.

The Government of Uruguay here reaffirms its determination to contribute to peaceful and harmonious fellowship between Arabs and Jews, both essential protagonists of civilization, and reaffirms as well its commitment to deepening its ties with the States of the Middle East.

We have before us an invaluable working document prepared by the Secretary-General. That document, with whose principles and approach we fully agree, gives rise to thoughts that we cannot fail to voice here.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

In this day and age, faced as we are with the global dimensions of the problems of peace and security, and confronted with situations that demand universal answers - situations that it is impossible to cope with through partial or territorially limited approaches, such as issues relating to the environment, drug trafficking and terrorism - we must rethink the question of sovereignty: not so as to weaken its essence, which continues to represent the underpinning of our international Organization, but rather to adapt it to current requirements, which are necessary for us to build a world based on peace and solidarity, and to act on the basis of the defence and protection of the interests of the global community as a whole, a precept that, according to Francisco de Vitoria, lies at the roots of the rights of peoples. This concept of humanitarianist universalism precludes the recognition of any legitimacy in the exercise of power by any individual Power outside the framework of international law.

The report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/227) presents in an organic and intelligent fashion a set of proposals to implement, within the new international context, a systematic process of preventive diplomacy. We fundamentally share its goals and the essential aspects of the global view upon which it draws.

We must give the Secretary-General the political backing he needs for him to act with the necessary flexibility and effectiveness, in line with the concepts that he has set forth.

We agree with the need to seek a greater balance between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Moreover, we welcome the fact that this report incorporates a proposal that Uruguay has always advocated, namely the wish that all our Member States unreservedly accept the competency of the International Court of Justice.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

We do not doubt the need to strengthen peace-keeping operations. In that connection, our country intends to preach by example. Uruguay has now increased to unprecedented levels the number of members of its armed forces and police forces made available to the United Nations, as measured against the size of our military forces and our population. By way of example, more than 900 members of our armed forces are currently participating in the peace-keeping operations in Cambodia, and a general from our Republic is commanding the United Nations contingent in Kashmir.

To consolidate and guarantee international security, there can be no delay in moving ahead with the process of disarmament that is currently under way. It must be expanded integrally in breadth and in depth.

We must halt any new spiralling of the arms race, whether this be on the global, regional or local level. Along those lines, Latin America and the Caribbean have been marking this particular phase in the evolution of international relations with a noteworthy effort to complete what in and of itself already constitutes a vast zone of peace.*

---

* Mr. Rogers (Belize), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

I should like to highlight the notable effort undertaken by Latin America, in which Uruguay has participated actively from the very outset, to amend the Tlatelolco Treaty in such a way as to enable Cuba to sign it, Argentina to ratify it and Brazil and Chile to submit their reservations to it. These amendments, which have already been adopted and have also resulted in France's ratification of Additional Protocol I, have ensured that the first nuclear-weapon-free zone, covering all of Latin America and the Caribbean, has come into real, total and full existence.

Uruguay firmly supports the adoption of the Convention on chemical weapons developed by the Disarmament Conference.

The mushrooming of regional armed conflicts compels us to give thought to new or renewed forms of cooperation in and coordination of world-wide and regional efforts to resolve differences and to enable us to act in the face of threats to and aggression against peace and security. Latin America, which today is a continent of peace and is resolving territorial or border disputes by legal and peaceful means, where there are no morbid outbreaks of xenophobia and racial hatred, and which is fighting, as never before in its history, to solve the problems of its indigenous peoples and of human rights, has a particular talent for setting up this necessary world-wide and regional coordination. The recent judgment handed down by the International Court of Justice concerning a territorial dispute between Honduras and El Salvador, and accepted by both parties; the submission to an arbitration tribunal of a border dispute between Argentina and Chile; and the new and positive spirit reigning in the dialogue between Ecuador and Peru aimed at solving the long-standing conflict that has pitted these two fraternal countries against each other bear witness to the example Latin America is setting.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

The duty all the States that make up the international community have to guarantee and protect human rights does not flow only from the international obligations that result from treaties in force; respect for human rights is born of the United Nations Charter and of the Universal Declaration. Furthermore, it is a principle of jus cogens which, if violated, entails international answerability and renders null all legal instruments contrary to this imperative law which originates in the will of the international community as a whole. The protection of human rights at world and regional levels has made signal progress in the law of nations of today, and the process of improvement must continue.

It is not, however, solely by developing international instruments for the protection of human rights that we shall achieve generalized respect for human rights. We must work hard to universalize a culture of human rights that would uproot from people's minds and behaviour intolerance, violence, hatred, and contempt for the dignity that each and every individual on the planet naturally has. The affirmation and dissemination of that culture of human rights is the great challenge that mankind must meet in the decades ahead.

The resurgence amongst us, in what for us is the cradle of Western civilization, of racism, racial intolerance and animosity rooted in ethnic, religious and cultural differences is cause for great alarm. These manifestations are compounded by episodes, not that far distant geographically, of forced population transfers, the appearance of detention camps and the commission of atrocities and practices that once again amount to a shameful blot on our contemporary civilization. The international community cannot close its eyes to these things, nor fail to act in the face of this terrible and unacceptable situation.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

Uruguay hopes that the holding of the forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights will be a historic landmark for the future in terms of respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Global stability is generally and permanently threatened by the vast amount and extent of grinding poverty. Apart from the fundamental, ethical reasons that inspire us all, there are security considerations that should make us tackle this widespread situation as a whole. This is why the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have decided to support the initiative put forward by our sister republic of Chile that a world summit on social development should be held in 1995. We welcome the fact that this concern caused this initiative to be included in the "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) put before us by the Secretary-General, and that it has been approved by the Economic and Social Council.

Because of its modi operandi that pay no attention to frontiers and because of the way it is organized, drug trafficking has become one of the most serious types of international crime. Uruguay insists that this form of modern-day aggression must be combated in all its various phases and manifestations. The capacity of the United Nations to act must be strengthened in such a way as to complement and assist the concerted action which our own countries must take by means of regional as much as global bilateral and multilateral instruments.

The need to achieve economic development on terms compatible with conserving the environment is a priority objective for our country. We are concerned at the fact that the Rio Conference did not result in the adoption of more specific and effective commitments. What concerns us far more, however, is the risk that the principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration and

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

in the programme of action agreed upon in Agenda 21 might remain a kind of catalogue of good intentions without any practical and effective application.

The solemn adoption of those documents, and even the signing of the Conventions on biodiversity and climatic change, which Uruguay will shortly ratify, are not going to halt the progressive deterioration in the environment. Although those documents are major contributions, the polluting activities that threaten our present and jeopardize our future have not stopped with their signing and will not stop once their hopefully rapid entry into force has occurred.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

We are all aware that the success or the failure of the process of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) hinges on the total and effective implementation of those commitments.

The road to Rio was difficult. However, more arduous still will be the road to be travelled from Rio on. States will have to shoulder their legal responsibilities and to implement the actual measures laid down in Agenda 21. Governments will have to agree to transform into legally binding obligations the principles of conduct, liability and compensation emanating from the Stockholm Declaration and later endorsed and developed in the Rio Declaration, which are considerably more than moral obligations. While today they are obligations stemming from international ordinary law, they are, moreover, authentic criteria embodied in jus cogens, and are valid erga omnes.

However, notwithstanding the foregoing, it is time to avoid ambiguous interpretations as to the real juridical value of these obligations. The President of Uruguay, in his address delivered at the Rio Conference, stated the determination of my country to propose the codification of those principles in a binding legal instrument. We will consider the most opportune time and place for giving practical effect to our initiative, even contributing a draft convention.

At the same time, this approach will have to be complemented by implementation of the plan of action agreed upon in Agenda 21. We know this objective implies collecting huge financial resources and adopting large-scale measures of technology transfers. We trust that the developed countries that have accepted the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility will find the political will needed for taking the lead in this effort. While appearing to be a great sacrifice, this action is an investment that brooks no delay for preserving the present and ensuring the future.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

Specific proof of Uruguay's priority interest in environmental problems is that we have agreed that the next meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Basel Convention on Toxic and Hazardous Wastes should be held in our country.

The changes that have been progressively noted in the political arena stand in dramatic contrast to the adverse trends that are ever more exacerbating international economic relations. We view with concern the fact that the crucial issue of development would appear to have been relegated to the back-burner amongst issues on the international economic agenda.

Just as early in the 1980s the problem was the external debt situation in the developing countries, at the beginning of the 1990s one can say that it is the inconsistencies in the macroeconomic and trade policies that jeopardize world economic growth and international monetary stability.

While the developing countries are redoubling their efforts at achieving adjustment, liberalization, deregulation and adaptation to new world realities, recessionary trends and low rates of growth in the industrialized countries, their bloated budgetary deficits, their increasing levels of indebtedness, the resurgence of their protectionist policies and the lack of coordination among their monetary and parity policies are factors creating major counterweights to any revitalization of the world economy, to any increase in trade and change in trade policy and to world-wide capital flows.

All this highlights the need for a better analysis and greater coordination of economic policies the world over.

In recent years we have witnessed a major process of reorganization in world trade, owing to two major trends unfolding side by side. On the one hand, efforts have been made in the context of the Uruguay Round aimed at guaranteeing an open international marketplace through a process of

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

liberalizing and expanding trade, while strengthening multilateral rules and discipline within the context of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). On the other hand, great economic blocs have emerged, in whose hands are concentrated most of the world's wealth, major trade flows, investment flows and flows of technological know-how. If these blocs wish to move towards development and general progress, they will have to evolve as open markets.

I am convinced this evolution will depend on what happens or fails to happen in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations of GATT, which today have become all but paralysed and are seriously jeopardized.

Failure in the Uruguay Round would be very serious and would trigger serious adverse repercussions for the world economy as a whole. It would send an extremely negative signal to economic operators, would open the doors to unilateralism and to relations based upon power, and would lead to an escalation of protectionism and an intensification of trade conflicts.

Thus, we must urgently call upon all participants in the Uruguay Round and, in particular, to those countries responsible for the main disagreements pending, to join their efforts and to make their positions more flexible so as to conclude the negotiations quickly and satisfactorily, with equitable results that would promote the liberalization of trade and avoid protectionist discrimination.

Within the United Nations, the current process of revitalization and restructuring the Organization in the economic and social fields must be seen as constructive. In this regard, we welcome the results of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and those of the first meeting of the revamped Economic and Social Council, held in New York last July.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

This process of revitalization must be pursued and intensified. The United Nations cannot stay on the sidelines of policy formulation with regard to the most important economic, financial and trade issues. What is urgently needed is a determined effort aimed at institutional and operational revitalization and the restoration of the indispensable credibility of the United Nations so that the Organization can fill the great institutional void that currently exists in the field of international economic relations and can successfully discharge its responsibilities.

Only thus will we manage to lay the groundwork for the more constructive and effective international copoeration that would make it possible to halt and reverse the adverse trends that prevail in the economic field. In this regard, my country gives particular importance to the role UNCTAD is called upon to play as the forum to further international economic relations that are conducive to development.

(Mr. Gros Espiell, Uruguay)

I cannot fail to mention the major effort my country has been making, together with Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, to establish a common market of the South in 1995. The various processes laid down in the Treaty of Asuncion and in the timetable adopted by the Presidents of the four States parties at the meeting in Las Leñas, Argentina, are being fully implemented. Thus, the process of subregional integration has already become the axis round which revolve our policies of development, renewal, openness and modernization, prompting us to look to the future with renewed optimism and conviction.

Uruguay, a State that cherishes peace, a founding Member of the United Nations, respectful of a democratic and pluralist law based on solidarity, is today taking part in this Assembly in the same spirit as always - determined to cooperate in building a world governed by the law of nations, just and peace-loving, with a universal international Organization capable of ensuring development and human rights while effectively and actively guaranteeing peace and security.

Mr. SANON (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): At the outset, I should like to convey the sincere congratulations of the delegation of Burkina Faso to Mr. Ganev on his election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. In him, we pay a tribute to Bulgaria and to the qualities that earned him these responsibilities.

We also pay a tribute to the devotion and conscientiousness with which his predecessor, Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, performed his duties.

Nine months after our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, assumed his post, his energy, creative imagination and firm determination have left their mark on the activities of our Organization. By strengthening its

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

universality, all the countries that have been admitted since the forty-sixth session give us grounds for joy. We wish them all a warm welcome and we have no doubt that we will all work together to attain the ideals of the United Nations Charter.

Our times have seen the irrepressible aspirations of peoples to freedom, national identity, and well-being flourish with more vigour and insistence than ever before. For some, these aspirations arose from the depths of their alienation, which they now reject; for others, from the example thus set by the former. Baptized as a "wave of democratization", this tempest, sometimes coinciding with developments already under way, swept away many inappropriate or obsolete human edifices to lay bare the ruins or foundations from which we must start building.

Born in 1987, the democratization movement in Burkina Faso, after years of an emergency regime, led to pluralism, to the election of a Head of State on 1 December 1987, and to general elections held in May 1992, in which the political parties asked the people for their votes. Today, democratic institutions are in place and the opposition, which sits in the Assembly, is also represented in the executive branch, where it holds several ministerial portfolios. This transition has been without jolts or major crises, and has led to the social peace necessary to our development efforts.

This indispensable social peace is what is lacking in Somalia, where our famished brothers are dying at a mind-boggling rate, whereas weapons are ubiquitous there and have made that martyred country a victim bled dry by intransigence and the absence of dialogue. In this respect, we welcome the healthy reaction of our Secretary-General, who is trying to size up the true scale of this tragedy and to find the requisite solutions. We are equally grateful for the international humanitarian assistance channelled there. But

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

much remains to be done to curtail and end the sufferings of the Somalian people.

Liberia is still in the throes of a civil war to which Burkina Faso and the other countries of the region cannot remain indifferent. Burkina Faso, shoulder to shoulder with them, will spare no effort to restore lasting peace so that the policy of economic integration, begun within the framework of the Economic Community of West African States, can also be pursued as well as possible.

In Angola, general elections are under way after 16 years of conflict suffered by the Angolan people. We hail the maturity of all Angolans, who have thereby agreed to close a difficult chapter in their history. The United Nations also played a positive role there. We hope that these developments will be successful. In Mozambique, similarly, a solution is in the offing, and we hope that a negotiated settlement will restore peace.

In South Africa, the hopes of the international community have been dimmed by the massacres of Boipatong and Ciskei. These events certainly were a manifestation of apartheid, whose death throes are just as repugnant and bloody as was its existence. We need to remind the South African authorities that they are responsible for the security of every South African and that these tragic excesses cannot simply be ascribed to animosity among blacks. It is now well established that subtle manipulation, together with an absence of security controls, can fan the flames of an already explosive situation. The resumption of the Convention for Democratic South Africa (CODESA) should take place in a climate free of the suspicion born of manoeuvring and calculation. In this respect, we believe that Security Council 765 (1992) of 16 July 1992 is only one step in the right direction. In order to assess the methods and effects of violence, more than 50 observers will be needed.

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

In the Middle East, the process begun at the Madrid Conference has yet to produce the hoped-for results. The Palestinian question remains and the aspirations of the Palestinian people are legitimate and justified. The political changes that have taken place in Israel raise hopes that we would wish to see fulfilled on behalf of the people of the region.

In Cambodia, efforts must continue to be made by all to implement the Paris Agreements. The unprecedented commitment of the United Nations should be welcomed, encouraged and reinforced.

In the heart of Europe, a conflict is developing, the nature of which is what observers tend to limit exclusively to Africa. Practices we thought had disappeared with nazism and condemned alongside apartheid are emerging under the label "ethnic cleansing". This is unacceptable. We cannot accept that Bosnia and Herzegovina be crucified in the name of religion or ethnicity. The London agreement and the Geneva negotiations must be complied with and pursued by all parties sincerely desirous of peace and reconciliation.

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

That picture does not inspire optimism. The collapse of one of the two blocs did not solve the world's problems. Rather, it emphasized the North-South split; old wounds that are still open; internal contradictions within regions; and divisions among nations.

In their millions, people are cast out into a life of wandering; children are robbed of their childhood, and of their adolescence too; a future without hope is already the lot of a growing number of people caught in the crossfire between one world that is dying and another that is being born. In the midst of all the uncertainty, the United Nations seemed to be a place of recourse where East, West, North and South could meet to accept the principles of the Charter and institute methods guaranteeing that armed force would not be used save in the common interest, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in wider freedom.

Security, solidarity, progress and freedom: these are words and concepts that 47 years after San Francisco have yet to be given form in the interest of the world's peoples.

The Secretary-General's proposals in his Agenda for Peace and in his annual report on the work of the Organization form a good basis for discussion.

It must be recalled and stressed that security not based on the interests of all, large and small, is self-limited. The maintenance of peace demands weighty and onerous operations that must be commensurate with the needs. It is right to stress preventive diplomacy: machinery for early warning and action that can be put into play before a conflict breaks out or that can prevent a conflict from taking place.

The United Nations, while in demand on all sides, remains available. It is regrettable that among the defenders of this new role for the Organization

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

are those who by not paying their contributions are handicapping the United Nations in this basic task.

We must ensure that the role of the Security Council does not give rise to questions about its involvement, its impartiality or its sense of fairness. The system devised 47 years ago has only been able to function for two years, and already there are concerns, some of which are justified. Depending on their geographical zone, conflicts seem to attract varying degrees of vigorous attention from the Council. This makes us believe that a structure created following the Second World War is now beginning to function in a completely different context. Some even talk of an anachronism. Clearly, the role and composition of the Security Council must be reviewed. But we fear that the discussion might be limited to merely expanding a club whose members would continue to view their status as a privilege, not a weighty responsibility. The spirit and perhaps even the nature of the Council must be changed. Clearly, we must begin the debate on the Security Council, even if we are still bound by the terms of Article 108 of the Charter. The democratization of international relations is necessary.

There can be no true security or just and lasting peace while three quarters of mankind continues to live in destitution, wretchedness and ignorance. That is a fact that has been repeated in this Hall over the years by a majority of delegations. Today's world is a world in flux, where the old questions remain and new solutions are taking too long in coming.

The North-South rift I mentioned before can be illustrated by figures, including the well-known fact that 20 per cent of the world's population receives 83 per cent of the world's income, while the poorest 20 per cent share but 1.4 per cent of the world's income.

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

Beset by natural disasters, conflicts and the effects of an international economic crisis, Africa still bears an external debt of more than $236.7 billion; it faces tariff and customs barriers erected by some of its economic partners; and it must deal with a high rate of population growth. To this we must add the obligatory adoption of structural adjustment programmes that will first cause pain before possibly doing some good. "Possibly" is the right word, since these adjustments are put in place in a context of economic uncertainty that jeopardizes the results for which we hope. Thus, we in Burkina Faso are working to obtain all the necessary support so that slippages will not call into question our political achievements, and particularly so that the structural-adjustment programme can lay the lasting foundations of genuine development and growth.

The rewards of the tireless efforts by African countries have not been commensurate with the sacrifices we have made. The promises of the North remain promises, just as the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development has not been truly implemented, except by Africans themselves. A new page has been turned with the new programme for the 1990s, but that page remains blank. We hail the few industrialized countries that have honoured their commitment to contribute 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product as official development assistance.

The international economic context is marked by increased monetary instability, slower economic growth, high unemployment and the relative failure of the Uruguay Round. But capital needs are first met among the industrialized countries before they turn to so-called transitional economies. Can we speak of competition for capital? Or must we say that Africa is simply waiting for a response that has not been forthcoming? The

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

response we want to hear and to turn into reality is the economic integration of our continent - South-South cooperation - along with allowing us the latitude of choice. As we said at the forty-sixth session, Burkina Faso is convinced that all our problems "can be solved only by dialogue and negotiation between developed and developing countries with a view to bringing about specific solutions through a multilateral approach to these problems". (A/46/PV.4, p. 56)

That was our approach to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - the Earth Summit - at Rio, and that was why we welcomed the framework Convention on climate change and the Convention on biodiversity.

The establishment of a commission for sustainable development could define the framework for what we have come to call the new global partnership. But as we all know, the Rio summit will be meaningful only if it is followed by the needed commitments with respect to additional resources and technology transfers. The Earth Summit has made the link between environment and development indissoluble.

We welcome the decision of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to set up an intergovernmental negotiating committee to draw up an international convention in the struggle against desertification. Burkina Faso will participate actively in that process and could act as host to some of the committee's meetings.

International events on the horizon include: the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993; the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994; the world summit for social development in 1995; and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, also in 1995. What they have in common is their subject and their protagonist: man.

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

We have already said that no one is against human rights because those rights are inherent in man. A partial, piecemeal vision of human rights would doom mankind ot exploitation and abandonment. The right to development, to food, to housing, to primary health care and to education: all these are part of human rights. To support that aspect without recognizing and accepting the basic nature of the rights of the individual would clearly be an imperfect approach to defining and solving the problem. Likewise, stressing the rights of the individual while confining oneself to defending them would be to refuse to see the world as it is today.

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

Indeed, earlier I spoke of the indomitable nature of the peoples' aspirations to freedom, national identity and well-being. The revolution in communication, the spread of ideas, the untapped potential of techniques and technologies have turned our world into a global village. We cannot indefinitely guarantee the security of the haves, the well-fed, to the detriment of others without doing permanent damage to the dignity and integrity of others.

That is why Burkina Faso believes that population questions are fundamental, and that is why we spoke out in favour of the convening of the world summit for social development. Nor can we approach the question of human rights and questions of population and development without including women, the mothers of the world.

These future conferences will be fairly meaningless if they do not lead to commitments that will lead, in turn, to tangible, concrete and satisfactory results. In that connection the follow-up to the World Summit for Children is important, and I should like to take this opportunity to remind the international community that in November at Dakar, Senegal, an African regional meeting will be held, under the aegis of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to examine and evaluate responses to the commitments undertaken at New York in 1990 and to assess the support that could be supplied by all the members of the international community.

Those meetings are therefore based on the principle of our common membership in the human race and on solidarity.

In 1995 the Organization will be 50 years old. The evolution in international relations has created an ever-greater role for the United Nations. We can even talk about a central role for it, as a crucial junction

(Mr. Sanon, Burkina Faso)

where political, economic, social and environmental concerns can be expressed and actually dealt with.

Hitherto regarded as a forum, the United Nations can now add to cooperation, deliberation and the ongoing discussion of the trio of peace, security and development its status as an unparalleled instrument at the service of joint action for the common good.

Burkina Faso will follow and actively discuss the various reforms and restructurings being planned for the whole of the United Nations system, for it is our conviction that they afford the international community a unique opportunity to implement the concept of global partnership.

It is only under those conditions that we will at last be able truly to implement the noble ideals of the Charter. It will no longer be a question of some pitted against others but, rather, of fighting the only fight worth fighting: the fight for a humanity living at peace in a saved environment.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.